

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE CLAIMS

Claim 14 has been amended to more clearly recite that the image forming apparatus of the present invention transmits trouble type information to the relaying server through the first firewall server and the Internet, and to more clearly recite that the image forming apparatus obtains restoration work information from the relaying server through the first firewall server and the Internet.

In addition, new independent claims 25 and 28 have been added to recite an image forming apparatus and an administrating apparatus for an image forming apparatus administration system according to the present invention, and new claims 26-27 and new claims 29-30 have been added to recite additional feature of the image forming apparatus and administrating apparatus of the present invention.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendment to claim 14 and the addition of new claims 25-30 be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 14, 15, 17 and 21-23 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of USP 5,819,110 (previously cited "Motoyama") and 2005/0280864 (newly cited "Lodwick"), and claims 16, 18-20 and 24 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of Motoyama and Lodwick in combination with USP 5,887,216 ("Motoyama '216"), USP 5,878,256 ("Bealkowski et al"), US 2004/0012807 ("Konishi") or USP 6,618,162 ("Wiklof et al"). These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed.

As explained in the Amendment filed on March 20, 2006, the structure of the present invention allows communication of trouble type information and restoration work information via the Internet. That is, even if the image forming apparatus is connected to the Internet through a first firewall server, the image forming apparatus can transmit trouble type information to the relaying server. In addition, the image forming apparatus can access the relaying server so as to obtain restoration work information from the relay server, and the image forming apparatus can conduct an automatic restoration process in accordance with the restoration work information.

Significantly, since according to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 14 and new independent claims 25 and 28, the image forming apparatus performs these

information communication operations via a first firewall server, even though the operations are conducted through the Internet, high security can be ensured. As a result, since a direct connection such as a telephone or ISDN line is not needed, the image forming apparatus administration system of the present invention can be constructed inexpensively without employing a direct connection.

The Examiner contends that Motoyama discloses the "substantial features of the claimed invention" but the Examiner acknowledges that Motoyama does not disclose a relay server. For this reason, the Examiner has cited Lodwick to supply the missing teachings of Motoyama.

It is respectfully submitted, however, that Motoyama in fact teaches away from communication via the Internet via a relay server in the manner of the claimed present invention, and that Lodwick merely discloses communication of print jobs, and does not disclose, teach or suggest a relay server in the manner of the claimed present invention.

Indeed, while Motoyama discloses a technique for monitoring a business machine, Motoyama discloses at column 2, lines 10-15, thereof, for example, that when a matter requiring urgent attention arises, a "connection-mode" of communication via a telephone or ISDN line should be used. By contrast, Motoyama discloses that the "connectionless-mode" of communication via the

Internet should be used for transmitting weekly or monthly reports from the business machine to the monitoring device. See, for example, column 8, lines 56-59 of Motoyama.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Motoyama teaches away from communication via the Internet when the business machine is encountering problems that require immediate attention. And it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would have had no motivation to modify the system of Motoyama to perform urgent communications via the Internet. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Motoyama is not properly combinable with Lodwick to achieve the structure of the claimed present invention.

In any event, moreover, it is respectfully pointed out that Lodwick merely discloses the communication of a print job over a network, and does not disclose, teach or suggest a relay server to which trouble type information is transmitted, and from which restoration work information may be obtained, by an image forming apparatus.

Still further, it is respectfully pointed out that although Motoyama discloses a machine capable of connecting to the Internet, Motoyama does not at all disclose, teach or suggest the structure of the claimed present invention whereby communication is performed through a firewall server and the Internet, and (as

pointed out above) Motoyama teaches away from performing communication of the type performed according to the claimed present invention via the Internet.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 14, new independent claims 25 and 28, and claims 15-24, 26-27 and 29-30 respectively depending therefrom, clearly patentably distinguishes over Motoyama and Lodwick, taken together and/or in combination with any of the other prior art references of record, under 35 USC 103.

IDS of May 2, 2006

It is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider the Information Disclosure Statement filed on May 2, 2006, and make the documents cited therein of record in the present application.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

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